

First Bureau meeting of the United Nations Habitat Assembly for the year 2023

Wednesday, 15 February 2023
15:30 hrs - 18:30 hrs, East Africa Time
Hybrid meeting-UN-Habitat OED Boardroom

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the provisional Agenda.

1. H.E. Mr. Erasmo Martinez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Mexican States to UN-Habitat (the **Chair**) chaired the meeting on behalf of Hon. Martha Delgado Peralta, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President of the United Nations Habitat Assembly. The Chair opened the meeting at 15:30 hrs EAT.

The following Bureau members were present:

In-person

H.E. Mr. Erasmo Martinez, Permanent Representative of the United Mexican States to UN-Habitat (on behalf of the President of the UN-Habitat Assembly)

Mr. Porforio Martinez, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Mexican States to UN-Habitat

Mr. Sergio Salazar Alzate, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Colombia to UN-Habitat and Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Ms. Cattrysse Machteld, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Belgium to UN-Habitat and Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Mr. Martin Row, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to UN-Habitat and Vice President of the Bureau of United Nations Habitat Assembly

Ms. Joanna Szymanska, Deputy Permanent Representative of Republic of Poland to UN-Habitat and Vice Chair of the Bureau of the Executive Board

Ms. Tong Guichan, Deputy Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to UN-Habitat and Rapporteur of the Bureau of the United Nations Habitat Assembly

Ms. Zhao Wenhua, First Secretary of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China

Mr. William Anani-Abotsi, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ghana to UN-Habitat and Vice President of the Bureau of the United Nations Habitat Assembly

Ms. Rena Asare Danso, Second Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Ghana

On-line

Hon. Martha Delgado Peralta, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President of the United Nations Habitat Assembly
H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High-Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Chair of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives
H.E. Mr. Dragoş Viorel ȚIGĂU, Permanent Representative of Romania, representing the Regional Group of Eastern European States in the 2021- 2023 Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Mr. Ruben Werchan, UN-Habitat Focal point, Federal Republic of Germany

Dr. Hugo Isaak, UN-Habitat Focal point, United Mexican States

Mr. Rodolfo Osorio, UN-Habitat Focal Point, United Mexican States

Ms. Bella Agnieszka, Chief Specialist, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy of the Republic of Poland

Mr. Sam, UN-Habitat Focal Point from the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development of the Republic of Ghana

The following UN Habitat Secretariat members were also present :

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director.

Mr. Raf Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division.

Mr. Chris Mensah, Secretary to the Governing Bodies.

Mr. Erfan Ali, Chief of Staff

Mr. Christopher Williams, Director, UN-Habitat Office in New York

Mr. Neil Khor, Chief Director of ERSKI

Mr. Stephen Slawsky, Director, Management Advisory and Compliance Service

Ms. Shipra Narang Suri, Chief, Urban Practices

Ms. Edlam Abera Yemeru, Chief, Knowledge and Innovation Branch

Mr. Justin Bonongwe, Management Advisory and Compliance Service

2. The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting. The provisional agenda was adopted without any changes and can be accessed [here](#).

Agenda item 2: General update on status of preparations of the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly

3. The Chair offered his condolences to the families of the victims, the Governments, and the people of Türkiye and Syria following the earthquake on Monday, 6 February 2023.
4. The Chair recalled that the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (**UN-Habitat Assembly**) will be held from 5 to 9 June 2023 and recalled that pursuant to paragraph 7 of Decision 1/3, the first session of UN-Habitat Assembly decided on the provisional Agenda for its second session which was further reviewed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat, during its first open-ended meeting for a high-level mid-term review. The Chair recalled that the provisional Agenda was also reviewed and confirmed during the Joint Bureaux meetings of the Governing Bodies of UN-Habitat held on 29 June and 18 October 2022.
5. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Executive Director provided an update on the status of preparations of the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly. The statement by the Executive Director can be accessed [here](#) and her detailed presentation can be accessed [here](#).
6. The presentation was followed by an exchange of views among Bureau members.

7. The Chair opened the floor for recommendation by the Bureau on the suggestions presented by the Executive Director under the following sub-items a) format of the session, b) high-level representation at the session, c) guidance on the preliminary proposed organization of work for the session, d) submission of draft resolutions and e) creation of a sub-committee of the CPR.

a) Format of the session

8. The Bureau recommended that the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly scheduled from 5 to 9 June 2023 be held in a hybrid format.
9. With the understanding that the choice and level of in-person representation remains at the discretion of Member States, the Bureau further encouraged high-level in-person participation to the session.

b) High-level representation at the session

10. The Bureau recommended a high-level representation at the Ministerial level and for substantive representation at the session, given that the UN-Habitat Assembly only meets every four years and is expected to discuss key issues related to human settlements and urbanization.
11. The Bureau further recommended the participation of local government, local authorities, academia, and training institutions to the session.
12. The Chair requested the support of the members of the Bureau in conveying to their respective Regional Groups the need for a high-level representation at the session.

c) Guidance on the preliminary proposed organization of work for the session

13. The Bureau recommended the proposed organization of work for the session as presented by the Executive Director, which can be accessed [here](#).
14. The Bureau further requested the Secretariat to share a draft skeleton of the programme of the session during the informal consultation by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to be held on 6 March 2023.
15. The Chair suggested that discussions on the draft Ministerial Declaration to be endorsed by the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly under the leadership of the President of the United Nations Assembly will be supported by Brazil and Ghana. Following the concern expressed by one member of the Bureau regarding the regional balance, the Chair further encouraged expressions of interests from other regional groups in supporting this process in order to ensure regional balance and inclusive negotiation of the draft Ministerial Declaration.
16. The Bureau recommended that the informal consultations by the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the preparations for the open-ended meeting of the CPR and for the Assembly itself be held in the morning and in the afternoon and requested the Secretariat to adjust the roadmap of meetings accordingly.

d) Recommendation for the submission of draft resolutions

17. Appreciating the fact that it is the prerogative of any Member State to introduce a resolution at the Assembly, the Bureau strongly encouraged Member States to commit to submitting proposed resolutions as soon as possible and no later than **15 April 2023**. The Bureau further requested the Secretariat to convey this recommendation to all Member States.
18. The Bureau arrived at this recommendation so as to allow sufficient time for negotiations and consensus-building including through informal consultations organized by the Chair of the

Committee of Permanent Representatives and through formal consultations during the open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in preparation for the UN-Habitat Assembly.

19. The Bureau recommended that draft resolutions that are formally submitted by this date be considered by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its second session.
20. The Bureau further recommended that the Secretariat be available to offer substantive advice or technical inputs to Member States in preparing such draft resolutions.
21. In addition, the Bureau also recommended that final submissions of draft resolutions for consideration by the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly should be by the end of day two of the session on 6 June 2023.

e) Creation of a sub-committee of the CPR

22. The Bureau Members recommended that the CPR at its next open-ended meeting in preparation of the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly consider establishing a subcommittee as provided in Rule 23.2 of the rule of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly.
23. The Bureau arrived at this recommendation taking into consideration the fact that a CPR subcommittee would be instrumental in the future in considering draft resolutions and in providing a framework both to Member States and to the Secretariat for the preparations towards the meetings of the CPR and sessions of the UN-Habitat Assembly.

Agenda item 3: Preparations for the elections of the members of the Executive Board for the term 2023-2027 and officers of the 2023-2027 Bureau of the United Nations Habitat Assembly

24. The Bureau recommended that the Secretariat sends a Note Verbale inviting Member States to start caucusing with a view to nominating their representatives to the respective Bureaux and to the membership of the Executive Board as follows:

a) Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat (CPR) for 2023-2025

25. In accordance with [rule 27 of the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly](#), the following regional groups are to provide candidates for the offices of the 2023-2025 Bureau of the CPR to be elected at the end of the second open-ended meeting of the CPR in preparations for the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly to be held from 29 to 31 May 2023 and on 2 June 2023:

Chair: Western European and other States

Vice-Chairs: Asia-Pacific States, Eastern European States, Latin American States

Rapporteur: African States

26. The new Bureau will hold office for a term of two years until the end of the high-level mid-term review of the CPR that is scheduled to be held in 2025. As stipulated in rule 18, the five members of the Bureau shall jointly serve as additional Vice-Presidents of the Bureau of the United Nations Habitat Assembly.
27. The Bureau recommended that the Chair of the CPR continues holding informal consultations with the Regional Group of Eastern European States to explore the possibility to switch the office of Rapporteur with another Regional Group where the position of Rapporteur will be assumed by another Regional Group, and the Eastern European Group would assume the position as Vice Chair instead in the 2021-2023 Bureau of the CPR.

28. The Bureau further requested the Secretariat to consult with the legal advisor on the modality of voting by secret ballots during a hybrid session.

a) Membership of the Executive Board for 2023-2027

29. In line with [rule 24 of the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly](#), the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly to be held from 5 to 9 June 2023 will elect on its first day the 36 members of the Executive Board, on the basis of equitable geographical representation and following the formula set out in the Report on the work of the Open-ended Working Group established by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
30. As indicated in the Report of the Open-ended Working Group (A/73/726), the Executive Board seat distribution shall be as follows: 10 seats for African States, 8 seats for Asia-Pacific States, 4 seats for Eastern European States, 6 seats for Latin America and Caribbean States, and 8 seats for Western European and other States.

a) Bureau of the Executive Board for 2023-2027

31. In accordance with [rule 9 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board](#), and as recommended by the Bureau of the Executive Board during its meeting held on 8 February 2023, the following regional groups are to provide candidates for the office of the Bureau of the Executive Board for 2023-2024 to hold office starting at the end of the second session of 2023 of the Executive Board:

President: African States

Vice-Presidents: Latin American States, Eastern European, States Western European and other States

Rapporteur: Asia-Pacific States

32. The election of the Bureau of the Executive Board for 2023-2024 will take place during the second session for the year 2023 to be held on 8 June 2023, in the margins of the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly.

b) Bureau of the United Nations Habitat Assembly for 2023-2027

33. In accordance with the principle of geographical rotation provided for in [rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the United Nations Habitat Assembly](#), the following regional groups are to provide candidates for the offices of the 2023-2027 Bureau of the UN-Habitat Assembly to be elected during the final meeting of the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly:

President: Asia-Pacific States

Vice-Presidents: African States, Eastern European States, Western European and other States

Rapporteur: Latin American States

34. The Bureau further recommended that the Secretariat provides a deadline for submission of nominations in the Note Verbale.

Agenda item 4: Any other matters

35. The Bureau recommended that should that be required, additional dates for the informal consultations by the CPR may be scheduled closer to the dates of the second-open ended meeting of the CPR.

The first meeting of the United Nations Habitat Assembly for the year 2023 was adjourned at 18:30 hrs. East African Time (EAT).